For a majority of this paper, I used the information I could get from the reading “Unspeakable Professions” by Catharine Edwards. This reading described the life of someone who is labeled by *infamia*. Information on this topic was mentioned throughout the letter. In the first paragraph, I mention that the actor was disowned by his elite family for choosing a life of infamia. Many of the children of the Roman elite would choose to take part in the acts of infamy. This can be proven in the section of the reading from pages 85 – 90. These pages go into detail explaining that they would sometimes take part in these unspeakable professions.

From the same reading, I go into the reasons as why one might choose *infamia*. In Rome, every male had an obligation to serve in the army. To avoid this obligation, the children of the elite would choose to relinquish their rights in order to avoid the obligation. On page 71, it describes that the actor is unfit to be in the army if he has appeared on stage. This supports my character’s choice of choosing the life of *infamia*.

In the following paragraph, I mention the roles of an actor on stage. One of these roles was that many actors had to portray females on stage. Page 80 of the same reading mentions a primary source by Tertullian that describes the male actor playing a female on stage. The reading then continues to provide further information about what the men who played females had to do onstage.

Continuing on the topic of women, the same reading mentions the desire that people had for actors. The following page (Page 81) explains that it was the actors who exposed their bodies on stage that made them so attractive. Page 80 confirms the information that I mentioned in that same paragraph about the actors having affairs with the wives of the emperors. The same information is supported in an article about Roman actors by G. Kenneth G. Henry titled
“Roman Actors”. Mnester was an actual actor who lived during the time of the ludus and he was cited as one of the actors that Messalina had an affair with.

The paragraph on my actor traveling mentioned the venues that they had performed in. The thought of performing in temporary theaters and the Theater of Pompey can be cited in the reading “The Roman Games” by Allison Futrell. The information on the venues of the actors can be found on pages 57 – 59. This same paragraph mentioned that the actor was using masks. This was quite common on the Roman stage during this time period. This information can be found in “Stage Directions: Essays in Ancient Drama in Honour of E.W Handley” edited by Alan Griffiths on page 94.

Lastly, the paragraph mentioning that the actor was close to the emperor was introduced in the reading by Edwards. This was referenced on page 79. To expand on this idea, I modeled my paper around the actor Paelignus described in the article “Roman Actors”. He was Claudius’s favorite jester. I chose to make this letter from the point of view of Paelignus before he became the friend of the emperor to show the progression of a new actor to one that became popular.
Works Cited


